

## North Clack Integrated Resource Project Red Tree Vole Report

### Documents Related to the Management of Survey and Manage Species and Red Tree Voles

- The Forest Plan was amended by the Record of Decision and [Standards and Guidelines](#)<sup>1</sup> for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (USDA, USDI 2001).
  - Red tree vole is a category C species (Standards and Guidelines page 49)
  - Direction for the management of high-priority sites for category C species (Standards and Guidelines page 10)
- [Survey Protocol](#)<sup>2</sup> (USDA, USDI 2012)
- Draft Survey Protocol (USDA, USDI 2017)
- [Management Recommendations](#)<sup>3</sup> for Oregon Red Tree Vole (USDA, USDI 2000)
- [Survey and Manage Direction Memo](#)<sup>4</sup> (USDA 2014)
- The Pechman exemption (described in the 2014 memo) is the result of a court case settlement. The relevant part of it exempts all provisions of the survey and manage standard and guideline for thinning proposals in stands under 80 years of age.

### Circumstances Specific to North Clack

Most stands with the highest likelihood of having red tree vole nests were eliminated from consideration in the early planning phase for the North Clack project. All old-growth stands and all stands considered suitable northern spotted owl habitat were excluded from proposed harvest units and therefore have not been surveyed for red tree voles.

For the North Clack project, some stands identified for potential treatment met the survey protocol prerequisite, and the Mt. Hood National Forest contracted surveys that were conducted according to the current survey protocol. Red tree vole surveys were required by protocol (USDA, USDI 2012) in 22 of the proposed treatment units equaling a total of 819 acres. Surveys were not required in the other proposed treatment units primarily due to ages of the stands or elevation constraints of the species. Ground-based transect surveys detected potential red tree vole in four proposed treatment units. Follow up tree climbing surveys found evidence of red tree vole presence within these units. 94 acres of harvest units were eliminated after these surveys.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.blm.gov/or/plans/surveyandmanage/files/rd-rod\\_s\\_and\\_g-2001-01.pdf](https://www.blm.gov/or/plans/surveyandmanage/files/rd-rod_s_and_g-2001-01.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.blm.gov/or/plans/surveyandmanage/files/sp-RedTreeVole-v3-0-2012-11.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.blm.gov/or/plans/surveyandmanage/files/mr-rtv-v2-2000-09-att1.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.blm.gov/or/plans/surveyandmanage/files/sm-fs-guidance-20140513.pdf>

Since then, a group of concerned citizens with considerable expertise in locating red tree vole nests, has climbed trees in the project area and found more nests that were not detected during the ground-based surveys because they could not be seen from the ground.

At the direction of the District Ranger, the Forest contracted out the climbing of additional trees consistent with draft survey protocols under development by USDA FS Region 6 (USDA, USDI 2017).

The following units or portions of units were resurveyed: 43, 46, 48, 71, 72, 76, 79, 90, 96, 106, 108, 112, 114, 116, 124, 131, 132, 133, 134, 142, 144, 176, 178, 179, 188, 190, 191, 196, 198, 200, 202, 203, 204, 206 and 212.

After verifying and validating nest sites found by Forest Service contract crews and those found by citizen climbers, the Management Recommendations (USDA, USDI 2000) document was used to create appropriate management areas around the best available habitat.

Recommendations for red tree vole Habitat Areas require a minimum of 10 acres and is intended to provide for protection of the physical integrity of the nest(s) and retain adequate habitat for expansion in the number of active nests at that site. The Habitat Areas must include a buffer of one site-potential-tree height around nests on the outer edge of such polygons and include any confirmed inactive red tree vole nests that are located within 100 meters (330 feet) of a confirmed active red tree vole nest. An example of the methodology is shown in Figure 1 below. Regional Forest Service biologists with red tree vole expertise were surprised that nests were found in this area. It was expected that the reoccurrence of large wildfires and the project areas logging history would have made the area marginal red tree vole habitat.

Surveys discovered approximately 50 active and 50 inactive nests out of 250 trees climbed. The portions of the management areas that overlapped with proposed harvest units resulted in the deletion of all or portions of units. Attached maps show the management areas created and unit deletions. As a result there will be a reduction of 287 acres of proposed treatments (in addition to the 94 acres deleted earlier).

## References

USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management. 2000. Management Recommendations for the Red Tree Vole. Version 2.0.

USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management. 2001. Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines. (Survey and Manage Plan)

USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management. 2012. Survey Protocol for the Red Tree Vole. Version 3.0.

USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management. 2017. Draft Survey Protocol for the Red Tree Vole. Version 4.0.

USDA Forest Service. 2014. Direction Regarding the Survey and Manage Standards and Guidelines. Memo to Forest Supervisors dated May 13, 2014.

**Figure 1.** From Management Recommendations for the Oregon Red Tree Vole (USDA, USDI 2000)













































